



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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REGIONAL OFFICES ESTABLISHED FOR COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

The establishment of four new regional offices and a new southern California program office for the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the appointment of regional directors to head up the new field organizations were announced today by Assistant Secretary of the Interior Ross Leffler. All of the new directors are present members of the staff of the Service.

The new regional offices will be located at Gloucester, Mass.; St. Petersburg, Fla.; Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Seattle, Washington. The fifth regional office already is in existence at Juneau, Alaska. The new program office in southern California will be located at San Pedro.

The new regional directors appointed are: Joseph F. Puncochar, at Gloucester; Seton H. Thompson, St. Petersburg; Samuel J. Hutchinson, Seattle; W. F. Carbine, Ann Arbor; and John Gharrett, Juneau.

The function of the new regional offices will be to implement the expanded commercial fishery program authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Service Act of 1956 and to improve services to the fishing industry and the general public by better coordination of field activities. The new southern California program office will supervise the semitropical fisheries work of the Bureau off that coast.

Assistant Secretary Leffler stressed that the establishment of these new offices will not affect the present regional pattern of the Fish and Wildlife Service's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife activities. They will continue to be located at Boston, Mass.; Atlanta, Ga.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Albuquerque, N. Mex.; Portland, Oreg.; and Juneau, Alaska.

Seattle was selected as the site for the direction of Pacific operations because the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries already has several important projects located there—Pribilof seal management, the North Pacific technological laboratory, Pacific Coast fishery investigations, a market news and statistical office, and research activities in connection with the North Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Juneau is already the site of present administrative office for Service activities and is the home of the Territorial government.

Gloucester, Massachusetts, was chosen because of its importance as a fishing port, its proximity to Boston, its central location in the fishery and because of plans for technological laboratory and other installations there.

Because of the many fishery activities which the Bureau conducts from Texas to North Carolina and because St. Petersburg is centrally located and has the transportation facilities necessary, it was chosen for South Atlantic-Gulf headquarters. This region is important for its big shrimp industry, its large menhaden fishery, its oyster and crab operations, and because of substantial landings of mullet, red snapper and Spanish mackerel.

The southern California site at San Pedro for a program office is centrally located with respect to the important semitropical fisheries of that area. Important problems of this office relate to the tuna and sardine fisheries. They are separate problems from those relating to the North Temperate Zone fisheries of the Pacific Northwest. As in the case of the Bureau's program office in Hawaii, the southern California office will report to the Bureau Director in Washington.

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